

§ 214.201

- (3) Loss of funds;
- (4) Relocation;
- (5) Other circumstances caused by reasons beyond the agency's control; or
- (6) Results of performance review.

(b) Agencies that seek temporary inactive status must submit a request to HUD in writing. Documentation or evidence of the condition(s) that rendered the agency incapable of carrying out its housing counseling plan must be submitted along with the request, if possible. Upon receipt of the request, HUD will review and notify the agency of approval or rejection, in writing. If approved, the agency's name and contact information will be temporarily removed from the HUD-approved Web list of agencies and the telephone referral system.

(c) The agency must notify HUD in writing and provide supporting documentation or evidence when it is ready to resume operation, or no later than the end of the inactive period. After review and acceptance by HUD, the agency's contact information may be restored to the Web list of HUD-approved and participating agencies and the telephone referral system.

(d) At HUD's discretion, if the condition(s) still exists, an extension of the inactive period may be considered or the agency may be terminated or removed from the Housing Counseling program. HUD will notify the agency in writing of its decision.

§ 214.201 Termination of HUD-approved status and grant agreements.

(a) *Cause for termination by HUD.* HUD may terminate an agency's approval; remove an SHFA; remove one or more branches or affiliates from the HUD portion of an intermediary's, MSO's, or SHFA's counseling program; and terminate any grant agreements (if applicable) upon confirmation of any of the following reasons:

- (1) Noncompliance with program requirements;
- (2) Failure to implement in whole or in part the agency's approved housing counseling work plan or failure to notify HUD of changes in the agency's housing counseling work plan;
- (3) Lack of the capacity to deliver the housing counseling activities de-

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scribed in its approved housing counseling work plan;

- (4) Failure to achieve outcomes described in the work plan;
- (5) Misuse of grant funds; or
- (6) HUD determines that there is good cause.

(b) *Agency withdrawal.* The participating agency may withdraw from the Housing Counseling program at any time.

(c) *Post-termination, post-withdrawal requirements.* All terminations by HUD, or an agency's withdrawal, must be in writing. When a termination or withdrawal occurs, the agency must return to HUD any unexpired "Certificate of Approval." A terminated or inactive agency cannot continue to display the certificate. If HUD has determined that an agency will be terminated from participating in the Housing Counseling program, and an agency does not voluntarily withdraw, then HUD may follow the provisions found in 24 CFR part 24.

§ 214.203 Re-approval or removal as a result of a performance review.

HUD may conduct a periodic performance review for all agencies participating in the Housing Counseling program. The performance review and the terms of re-approval or removal of a participating agency are described in § 214.307 and § 214.309. At the end of the approval period, and upon completion of a successful performance review, if conducted, HUD will reapprove agencies.

§ 214.205 Appeals.

An agency making an application for approval, or an approved agency seeking reapproval, shall have the right to appeal any adverse decisions rendered by HUD under this part:

(a) *Appeal must be in writing.* An agency may make a formal written appeal to HUD.

(b) *Timeliness.* HUD must receive an appeal within 30 days of the date of the HUD decision letter to the applicant agency. HUD is not bound to review appeals received after this 30-calendar day period.

(c) *Other action.* Nothing in this section prohibits HUD from taking such

other action against an agency as provided in 24 CFR part 24, or from seeking any other remedy against an agency available to HUD by statute or otherwise.

Subpart D—Program Administration

§ 214.300 Counseling services.

(a) *Basic requirements.* (1) Agencies must provide counseling to current and potential homeowners and tenants to assist them in improving their housing conditions and in meeting the responsibilities of homeownership or tenancy.

(2) Except for reverse mortgage counseling, housing counselors and clients must establish an action plan for each counseling client.

(3) Counseling may take place in the office of the housing counseling agency, at an alternate location, or by telephone, as long as mutually acceptable to the housing counselor and client. All agencies participating in HUD's Housing Counseling program that provide services directly to clients must provide in-person counseling to clients that prefer this format.

(4) Regardless of setting or format, counseling activities must be limited to the geographic area specified in the agency's approved housing counseling work plan.

(5) With prior approval from HUD, a network of affiliated counselors or a HUD roster of counselors, designed to meet a special housing counseling need, may be permitted to provide specified types of counseling nationally.

(6) All participating agencies that offer group educational sessions must also offer individual counseling on the same topics covered in the group educational sessions.

(b) *Counseling services.* For each client, all agencies participating in HUD's Housing Counseling program shall offer the following basic services:

(1) Housing counseling, on at least one of the topics described in paragraph (d) of this section, that enables a client to make informed and reasonable decisions to achieve his or her housing goal.

(2) Referrals to local, state, and federal resources.

(c) *Follow-up.* Make a reasonable effort to have follow-up communication with the client, when possible, to assure that the client is progressing toward his or her housing goal, to modify or terminate housing counseling, and to learn and report outcomes.

(d) *Agency's housing counseling work plan.* (1) A participating agency shall deliver housing counseling services consistent with the agency's housing counseling work plan. The work plan should identify housing counseling services to be provided in response to one or more of the needs in targeted communities and geographic areas where the agency and its branches and affiliates provide their housing counseling services.

(2) Participating agencies may also conduct marketing and outreach, including, but not limited to, providing general information about housing opportunities, conducting information campaigns, and raising awareness about critical housing topics such as predatory lending and fair housing topics.

(e) *Approved housing counseling, education, and outreach topics.* The following are examples of approved housing counseling, education, and outreach topics that participating agencies may provide to and discuss with clients:

(1) Prepurchase/homebuying, including, but not limited to: Advice regarding readiness and preparation, Federal Housing Administration-insured financing, housing selection and mobility, search assistance, fair housing and predatory lending, budgeting and credit, loan product comparison, purchase procedures, and closing costs;

(2) Resolving or preventing mortgage delinquency, including, but not limited to: Default and foreclosure, loss mitigation, budgeting, and credit;

(3) Home maintenance and financial management for homeowners, including, but not limited to: Escrow funds, budgeting, refinancing, home equity, home improvement, utility costs, energy efficiency, rights and responsibilities of home owners, and reverse mortgages;

(4) Rental topics, including, but not limited to: HUD rental and rent subsidy programs; other federal, state or